Application No.: 10/670,320

Reply to the Office Action dated: April 29, 2005

REMARKS

Applicants wish to thank Examiner Dote for indicating allowability of Claim 13-14 if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application, as amended, in view of the following remarks.

Applicants note that Claim 4 was not rejected over <u>Yagi et al</u>, Claims 2 and 4 were not rejected over <u>Nanya et al</u>, Claims 2, 4 and 6 were not rejected over <u>Nakanishi et al</u> combined with <u>Hitake</u> and <u>Shirai</u>, Claim 6 was not rejected over <u>Nakanishi et al</u> combined with <u>Anno</u>. Since the limitations of Claims 2, 4 and 6 have been included in Claims 1 and 24, the present Claims should therefore be allowable.

The rejection of Claims 1-23, 25 and 27 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, is obviated by the amendments of the claims.

The objection to the specification is obviated by the amendments to the specification and by the amendment of Claim 27.

Furthermore, all inventors designated in this application were under obligation to assign the results of their research to Ricoh Company, Ltd. at the time the invention was made.

Applicants note that they responded to the objections regarding various Information Disclosure Statements on May 31, 2005.

Applicants note that MPEP §821.04 states, "if applicant elects claims directed to the product, and a product claim is subsequently found allowable, withdrawn process claims which depend from or otherwise include all the limitations of the allowable product claim will be rejoined." Applicants respectfully submit that should the elected group be found allowable, the non-elected claims 26 and 28 should be rejoined.

Application No.: 10/670,320

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Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner acknowledge that the references AA and AB cited in the Information Disclosure Statement, filed in the above-identified application on September 26, 2003, have been considered. For the Examiner's convenience a copy of Form PTO 1449 as filed on September 26, 2003, is attached herewith.

Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner acknowledge that the references cited in the Information Disclosure Statement, filed in the above-identified application on May 31, 2005, have been considered. For the Examiner's convenience a copy of Form PTO 1449 as filed on May 31, 2005, is attached herewith.

This application presents allowable subject matter, and the Examiner is kindly requested to pass it to issue. Should the Examiner have any questions regarding the claims or otherwise wish to discuss this case, he is kindly invited to contact Applicants' below-signed representative, who would be happy to provide any assistance deemed necessary in speeding this application to allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND, MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.

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Date Considered

Examiner

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